



THREE GRAND CHARGES.

What Couch's Division Resisted at Malvern Hill.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: The night preceding the battle of Charles City Cross-roads our division (Couch's) marched through the woods and swamps, coming out at daylight below Malvern Hill on a broad highway. It shortly afterward moved to the crest of the hill, where it maneuvered in line-of-battle supporting the artillery, who were engaged in repulsing Wise's rebel division, who had come down from Richmond on the River road to gain possession of this position.

This affair is known as Turkey Bend, or what might be properly termed the extreme left of the battle of Charles City Cross-roads. That night we stacked arms on the broad plateau some distance in front of the old Colonial mansion that surmounts the hill.

At daybreak the next day, July 1, we moved by the right flank a short distance, and swung into line-of-battle opposite a strip of timber skirting a road. The rebel artillery had opened at this time. Soon we moved through the belt of woods, and hugged the bank of the road in such a hasty manner that we were passing down and all around it.

Orders came for us to move to the support of one of our batteries. To reach this position we had to cross a field of grain, lying down several times to avoid canister and shrapnel. When we reached the battery we found it hotly engaged with a rebel battery across a ravine and a flock of sharpshooters who were annoying our battery boys. These were soon driven out by one of our companies under Capt. John F. Glenn (later Colonel). Our battery was "good stuff" standing up to its work well. While we lay in support of the battery the rebels had an enfilading fire which swept a few feet from our heels, throwing the sand all over us.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: In the issue of your paper for Aug. 22, in answer to Wm. M. Newcomb, you say you are unable to give the strength of the various regiments engaged at Cedar Mountain.

In April, 1862, there was published in THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE a description of the part taken in the battle by Banks's troops, written by myself, in the preparation of which I took great pains to ascertain the strength of the various commands engaged in that action, belonging to Banks's Corps. From that article I make the following extracts:

First Division (Williams's), First Brigade (Crawford's), had four regiments—46th Pa., Col. J. P. Knappe, 23 officers, 481 men; on the right, 28th N. Y., Col. David D. Dively, 18 officers, 329 men; 5th Conn., Col. Andrew D. Chapman, 21 officers, 424 men; 10th Me., Col. George L. Beal, 26 officers, 435 men; making a total effective strength present in the brigade of 88 officers and 1,679 men. Two companies of the 5th Conn. and one company of the 28th N. Y. were detached for other duty on that day.

There was no Second Brigade in the First Division at this time.

Gordon's (Third) Brigade of Williams's Division had Coltrane's Battery (M., 1st N. Y. L. A.) of three-hundred rifles, and three regiments of infantry, the 24th Mass., Col. Maydew; 34th Wis., Col. Ringer; and 27th Ind., Col. Colgrove; and one company of "Zouaves," Capt. Collins, attached to the 24th Mass. Gordon had less than 1,500 men, exclusive of artillery.

The Second Brigade, Brig-Gen. Henry Prince commanding, was composed of a battalion of the 8th and 12th U. S., Capt. Priehel; 102d N. Y., Maj. Lane; 109th Pa., Col. Stainbrook; 111th N. Y., Maj. Walker; 3d Md., Col. DeWitt; and 4th Me. battery. Total strength, 1,455.

The Third Brigade, Brig-Gen. George S. Greene, had the 78th N. Y.; a battalion of District Columbia Volunteers; and the 6th Me. battery—457 enlisted men. Total enlisted men of the Second Division present, 3,013.

Estimating 20 officers for each regiment and battalion, and five for each battery, which is a liberal estimate, and we have 235 officers, which gives a grand total of 3,248 officers and men in that division. There were present in the field, belonging to the First Division, the batteries of Best, Coltrane, and Rosser, not included in the returns of that division. Calling the strength of these batteries 100 officers and men each would give Banks 6,815 officers and men of infantry and artillery present at Cedar Mountain, and not over 1,200 cavalry, or 8,000 men of all arms.

I am satisfied that the strength of Banks's force, present for duty on the field, was within the above limit. After the publication of any article, I had considerable correspondence with the ex-Confederate soldier and historian, Col. Wm. Allan; and after I had given him the details from which I made my estimate of the strength of Banks, he frankly wrote me that he was satisfied my estimate was substantially correct.

I have no details as to the effective force of McDowell's Corps, as they did not come up till the engagement was over, and their total loss (excluding the cavalry) was one officer and one man killed, six officers and 74 men wounded, and 20 men missing; and the brigade of Bayard, which, in the return of casualties, is placed as in the Third Corps (McDowell's), was with us during the entire action, and is included in the total strength of Banks's force.

If Comrade Newcomb will consult Rebellion Records, Vol. XII, part 2, he will find reports from every part of the forces that were engaged in the battle of Cedar Mountain, and from those he can draw his own conclusions.

I have many reports that have not been published, to my knowledge, and many letters from officers and men, both "blue and gray," who were engaged in that hard-fought action.—H. A. TRIPP, Co. F, 10th Me., Crawford's Brigade, Williams's Division, Baltimore, Minn.

advance, and we expected it. But when we woke up, about 1 a. m., and moved off in what we thought was in the direction of the rebel Capital, we found we were again going to the rear, winding up on the plateau at Harrison's Landing.

A rebel battery had followed us up, after throwing a few shells into our bivouac, was brought into camp—men, horses and guns—by Kearny, thus ending the Seven Days battle.

I would say this was the best battle fought between the Army of Northern Virginia and that of the Army of the Potomac. There were no breastworks or trees to afford protection. It was fought in open fields; an all-day fight.

The charge made by the Confederates we consider among the greatest and most desperate of the war, and in at least one particular excelled Pickett's at Gettysburg.

Pickett's charge on July 3, 1863, was magnificent, grand, heroic, and the troops that repulsed them were sublime; but Pickett's men came on once more gallantly and grandly, and could not be rallied until they were driven from the field, and the result was the fall of the city of Richmond.

The Confederates, July 1, 1862, at Malvern Hill, came on three times, twice over their dead and wounded. Veterans who were in charges will remember that in going in we do not see the destruction, and it is in coming back we see the dead and wounded, and really these men to go back again over this ground, they must be classed as good stuff. Whether they were the same troops or not we do not know, but we do know that Couch's Division was part of the left center at Malvern that resisted successfully these grand and desperate charges.

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At that time there was a prevailing opinion among the Texas, Louisiana, and Gulf States troops that the Virginians, Tennesseeans, and North Carolinians were inferior people, and not much account for fighting, and I remember hearing that opinion expressed by a Louisiana man as late as the Fall of 1864.

Soon after the two Tigers were shot a Virginia soldier peddling whisky in the camp of the Catahoula Guerrillas was arrested and unceremoniously bucked and gagged. A crowd of soldiers gathered around him, when the Catahoula Captain walked up, and pointing at the whisky peddler, said:

"Gentlemen, this is the kind of people we fight on Louisiana homes to come here to fight our countrymen, and to desert a comrade true in the face of torture. He remained true to his flag when his officers were over to the enemy, and scorned all bribes, remaining true to his allegiance through many weary months of imprisonment."

Many a riot-ridden community has hailed with joy the coming of the Regulars as they march in quietly and without swagger, and relieve the terrorized people of the double curse of riotous hoodlums and undisciplined militiamen. But the poor old Regular has no friends; he is a back number. Sitting Bull, George Custer, Custer's Native, and Geronimo are all "good Indians" now, and there is no more need of the old-time Regular with his old-time gun and his home-made thimble-belt.

"LAST OF THE TIGERS."

Some Good Stories of the Louisiana "Terror."

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Whether on the plains of Mexico with the gallant Worth, or covering the retreat of the Federal army from Bull Run, or holding down the field at Fredericksburg, the old-time Regular was always to be relied on not to stampede. And though he sometimes growled—and he often had cause to grumble—when there was work for him to do it was done, though he often died in doing it—his body was laid to rest in peace, and in some beleaguered stronghold with his half-score comrades dead about him, and with but one cartridge left with which to put himself beyond the reach of the fiends who never knew mercy—the "Able bodied men."

The old-time Regular has long since learned that his 25 years count for less than three months' service in the volunteers, though the three were served in some safe casemate, and he says nothing about his army experience, and his papers are stowed away in his box. They are useless as recommendations. He is used to hear himself and his comrades spoken of as "uninformed loafers," "mercenaries," etc.

Now and then he meets the man with the empty sleeve or the Government leg; the man who "bore the brunt of the battle," and says nothing about it; the man whose record is written in his body; the man with the bronze button in his coat; the man who believes that "who loveth the flag is a man and a brother," and they have a good old soldier talk—the soldier of the war of the rebellion and the soldier of the wars of the Republic.

The ranks of the Army are often heard from at Campfires and other gatherings of the volunteer veterans, and they have much to say on many subjects, but never a word in behalf of him who fought at the Rosebud, the Big Horn, and Slim Buttes.—W. M. GURNEY, Co. K, 8th U. S., Howard, R. I.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: I see in your Aug. 22 issue an article by Comrade Brown, 47th Ind., describing an incident that occurred in the ranks of the 47th Ind. I have heard of this 24-pounder at Point Pleasant, Mo. We were stationed at Point Pleasant, and those rebel gunboats shelled our camp most every day. We did guard duty in the rifle-pits at Point Pleasant for some time, and I remember that the 47th Ind. was there on March 17, 1862. "Another detail" took this 24-pounder to Riddle's Point. Well, the 8th Wis., or part of it, was that "detail."

We took that gun out of the mud where he left it, and pulled that same rope. How glad I was to get that gun out of the mud! It was great fun, and each man did his level best, thinking of shelling the Johnnies; but as the boys of the 47th Ind. got tired, we too, began to think it a hard road to travel.

It was nearly morning when we made the haul and pulled the gun over the top of the hill. We were camped in a swamp where lizards and other inhabitants of that mud country were in abundance. I don't remember the details, but I remember that the 47th Ind. was there on March 17, 1862. "Another detail" took this 24-pounder to Riddle's Point. Well, the 8th Wis., or part of it, was that "detail."

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THE OLD-TIME REGULAR.

Plea for the Bearer of the Brunt of the Wars of the Republic.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: We are hearing a great deal just now about the new Army, and incidentally something about the old-time Regular. It is claimed on all sides that the old-time Regular was a disipated and altogether worthless character, and not to be compared with the grown-up Tommie Reeds who form the rank and file of the new Army. We are told by the sapient magicians that the old-time Regular was often a "chronic kicker and growler and sometimes a deserter," and that the country is well rid of him.

All this harrows up the soul of the poor old Regular as he thinks of his 20 or 30 years' service; of the many weary marches in the face of Dakota blizzards; of the headlong charge at break of day by the Stonewall Apache ranches; of scores of dead comrades buried where they fell, from the everglades of Florida to the canyons of Sonora.

Whatever else may be charged against the old-time Regular, it cannot be said that he betrayed his country, or deserted a comrade true in the face of torture. He remained true to his flag when his officers were over to the enemy, and scorned all bribes, remaining true to his allegiance through many weary months of imprisonment.

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